

LCQ4: Community Garden Programme

Following is a question by the Hon Lau Wong-fat and a reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 7):

Question:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department is now implementing the Community Garden Programme (CGP). Moreover, the Government is gradually drawing up Greening Master Plans (GMPs) for various districts in Hong Kong, and the public are welcome to participate in community greening. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether it will consider supporting the implementation of the measures proposed in GMPs by means of CGP, i.e. motivating the public to grow in community gardens specified tree saplings and flower seedlings which will be used for implementing GMPs; if it will, of the details; if it will not, the reasons for that;

(b) of the respective areas of the existing community gardens and the respective numbers of members of the public who participated in CGP in 2007-2008 in various districts, broken down by District Council district; and

(c) whether the Government will consider setting up temporary community gardens on "Government, Institution or Community" sites of undetermined use?

Reply:

Madam President,

My reply to the questions is as follows:

(a) In order to encourage the public to participate in greening activities at community level, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department launched the Community Garden Programme (CGP) in 2004. CGP enables participants to enjoy the fun of gardening activities in garden plots in their neighbourhoods, so as to arouse their awareness in greening.

CGP is implemented by organising gardening courses. The public can join the courses as individuals or groups. Each course lasts for four months. Each participant is allocated a

garden plot and can learn gardening skills with four relatives or friends under the guidance of an instructor. Participants are free to plant any flowers, vegetables or fruits and reap the yields for their own consumption.

The Greening Master Plans (GMPs) seek to define the overall greening framework and establish a greening theme of an area by considering the character and needs of that area. The implementation of GMP requires massive planting of trees, shrubs and seasonal flowers while most participants of CGP choose to plant vegetables or fruits and share the yields with their relatives and friends. As only a small portion of CGP participants choose to plant flowers and the productivity is minimal, the yields of CGP are not adequate to support the implementation of GMPs.

(b) The area of community gardens in each of the 18 districts is about 1 000 m², making a total of about 19 000 m² in the territory. In 2007-08, 7 800 members of the public participated in CGP. Since its launch in 2004, 20 000 people have participated in the Programme.

(c) The Government has all along been proactive in promoting greening activities and it will continue to consider setting up temporary community gardens on suitable “Government, Institution or Community” sites which do not have a firmed development plan.

Ends/Wednesday, May 7, 2008